

[Dewitt Hines]

February 2, 1939

DeWitt Hines, Sheriff

Columbus, N.C.

Adyleen G. Merrick, Writer

Dudley W. Crawford, Reviser.

Original Names Changed Names

Dewitt [Hines John Hogan

Polk County Parks County

Fingerville S.C. Zanesville, S.C.

Charleston S.C. Clarkville, S.C.

Elizabeth Bannard Eliza Banks

Columbus Caton

Spartanburg, S.C. Sparta

George Duff Jim Duffy

Woodson Goode

White Oak Mountain Pine Mountain

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Joe Maddon George Monk C9 [?] N.C. Box 2

Sheriff John Hogan is six feet, four inches tall, powerfully built, with the physique of an athlete. Attentive to his job as sheriff of Park County and fair in all his dealings, he holds the respect of the community he serves, striving always to keep the peace and avoid trouble whenever possible.

Swinging along at an unhurried gait, his forty five strapped over his right hip pocket, he makes a striking picture of strength and alertness.

He was born at Zanesville, S.C., in 1880, and is the oldest of a family of fifteen.

He can still remember the first spending money he ever earned. One year he and his two sisters were given an acre of land to plant in cotton; from this labor came the first real earnings. John purchased his first suit of ready made clothes.

The following year they raised turkeys, and with profits from their sale John earned money to make a trip to Charleston, S.C. where he found work with a street car company, later to be promoted to conductor, then Motorman. After two years he was again given promotion and made an inspector at a considerable increase in pay.

While working in Clarksville he met Eliza Banks whom he later married.

Sheriff Hogan chuckled when he came to this 2 part of his story, "Eliza was sure a handful" he said, "I was a long time getting her to make up her mind to marry me, first she said, 'she wasn't sure she wanted to get married;' then , she 'believed we were both too young to know what we were doing', next , ' we'd better wait a while until I had a little more saved up'.

"I courted that girl faithfully for two years and still she couldn't make up her mind, One day I got riled up and decided if Eliza wasn't going to marry me I wasn't going to spend any

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more time trying to get her to say 'yes'. I decided I'd leave and go to New York where I could get a job as a moterman. Well, when Eliza found this out, and I didn't try very hard to keep it from her, she made up her mind all right. We were married that same week. She reminds me to this day about my not giving her time to get ready for a church wedding, and how I was too busy to take more than two days, Saturday and Sunday, for a wedding trip to Sullivan's Island. I get right worried about that to this day; seems like I did act sort of thoughtless, but I didn't know wimmen set so much store by weddings and the like.

"I often wonder what would have become of me if Eliza hadn't made up her mind when she did. I went to New York once, took a prisoner from Caton, and I just don't believe, after seeing the place, that I would have 3 done well there, everybody's in such a hurry. Don't seem as if they have time for strangers much, and then there is noise both day and night so a body can't get good rest. No, I don't believe I'd liked it up there, I guess its it's a good thing I didn't go.

"Eliza and I lived in Clarksville until after the children began to come, It was awfully hot in the summertime, hard on the little fellows, so we decided it would be healthier for them in the mountains and moved to Park County, near Caton. I rented a right good farm and we have been here ever since.

"Eliza liked living in the country; she was busy all day planting in her posey garden every chance shegot when she wasn't busy at something else. Eliza loves flowers; old folks say she has a 'growing hand'. Any how she can sure beat the world making things grow and bloom. We have ten children now, so she doesn't have much time to garden. She says she is mighty glad she looked far enough to plant things that would sort of care for themselves while she was so busy looking after the babies. Eliza's garden is awfully pretty especially in the spring when snowballs and lilacs bloom and all sorts of yellows push up through the ground almost before you know it.

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"Looks like those are the days Eliza slips out just a little on the housekeeping job. I'm pretty apt to find her busy weeding and working with her flowers 4 when I come home, and have her tell me 'I've set out your dinner on the kitchen table, don't wait for me, I'm not hungry'. Those are the days I get short rations and no attention to speak of. I eat and leave in a hurry too , before she puts me to work digging in the flower garden.

"In 1929 I was made deputy sheriff of Park County and held that job four years. With the defeat of the sheriff in 1932 I lost my job as deputy. A few months later I was given the work of Superintendent of Prison Camps; not much of a job but a fellow can't wait till a good one comes along when he has a wife and ten children to look after.

"We've been pretty lucky about the children too, not any of them has ever given us cause to worry; and we have lost only one. Sometimes I wonder how they managed to escape death with all their wild pranks. Every time I go home one or the other of them has met with some sort of grief. Eliza has spent a heap of her time tying up toes and tucking in shirttails. They wear on her so much with their mischief and getting hurt that when vacation rolls around I sort to a have to take them off her hands in relays.

"We are right glad to have a big family though, troublesome or not. I just couldn't imagine what a Christmas would be like with no children to get all worked up about Santa Claus coming.

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"After the children began growing up I sort of planned to moved to Sparta, S.C. where I thought I'd get a good start. I figured the oldest children might get a chance to go to school at some of the colleges there. Just about the time I'd decided to move, my friends came to me and said, "John, why don't you run for sheriff yourself this time'? I hadn't considered it much but they kept behind me until finally I offered for election and was elected to office 1936. It was a hard fight, lots of days I wished I had never run, I had to borrow money for

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my campaign, I never ran down my opponent, and I didn't know enough to boost my own stock, its a big wonder I was elected. I guess my friends did a heap for me.

"This summer I ran for re-election against the man I had been deputy under. He seemed to think I ought to have withdrawn from the race when he decided to run again but I couldn't to do that, I owed money I had borrowed to run the first time; anybody knows it takes more than one term in office to get even much less make a living. A man is entitled to more than one term if he is any good in the first place.

"From then on the fat was in the fire and I had to get right down to winning that election. I believed a woman helped me win it , too. She said to me one day, 'Sheriff you quit passing out cigars and spending all your money and time after men's votes. Women vote in Park County , too, let 6 them know you are conscious of the fact'. Then she just laughed and walked off. I stood there and just studied over what she had said and doggone if I didn't see where she was right. I certainly went after their votes from then until election day , and I won.

"Park County is a right law abiding section, most of my work is raiding stills and running down bootleggers. There is a lot of illicite whiskey made in this county, lots of trouble come of it. The presiding Judges raise sand during court week about us cluttering up the docket with so many liquor cases, but I'd rather yee see it that way than murder trials. Park County only averages about one murder case a year, sometimes not that, and has never sent a man to the electric chair. Of my eight years in office I've only had one cold blooded murderer to deal with, and just one word saved him from the chair. Seems like he and a school bus driver got in a row and there was bad feeling which ended in a shooting scrape.

"No one saw the fight but Jim Duffy's dying statement said, 'Goode shot him in the back of the bus'. Jim died from the bullet wound inflicted when Goode shot him in the shoulder from the side of the bus, but Jim didn't know it so Goode claimed self defense and got off on the statement Jim made.

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"A heap of just such evidence gets worked into cases and causes justice to miscarry.

"Court is [?] in sesion now but there is nothing of 7 enough importance to keep the Judge awake.

So far, I've been mighty lucky. I've only been shot at twice, once when I was cutting a still over back of Pine Mountains, and another time an escaped prisoner from Raleigh took a crack at me. Of course, raiding [?] always has its dangers, like the time we cut George Monk's still. It was the second time in a month, and he got pretty riled, I guess. Usually blockaders take it all right when a still is cut occasionally, but this twice in succession got George upset. We started out one night a little after dark and drove in behind the mountain about two miles from George's still we hid the car in an old deserted shed and walked on, following a path that led through a stretch of woods to a good size stream of water.

"It was pretty hard going to find [?] out way along the waters edge. Before long we could smell smoke, this told us we were headed right. We crept along until we came to a place where smoke was coming out of the mountains through cracks in the rocks, and there at the mouth of a sort of cave, was George's still. He was sitting right in front of the entrance with his shot gun across his knees like he sort of expected us. We stopped to talk things over about how would seem the best way to run up on him. Just about that time my deputy's foot slipped on a loose stone and he went scattering through the bushes right into a stream with a splash. I don't believe I'm a coward, but George not into to shooting, I put distance between us. I located 8 my deputy and we lit out for cover. After we had gotten out of gun range we made a circle of the still and waded down the stream from above George's still and surprised him after all. He thought we were gone and felt so sure we wouldn't come back again that night that he had gone to sleep on a pile of sugar sacks, and we caught him easy. I felt pretty cheap about his making us run, and catching him like we did made me feel better,. Its all in a days work though, sometimes you catch them, sometime you don't.

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"If I'm defeated next election I'm sort of figuring on going down near Sparta, like I planned to do, and get me a nice peach orchard. It ou ought pay, and / then, too, I've never been able in all my life to make out to buy as many peaches as I want to eat."